

## NOTES ON THE FLOWERING PLANTS OF MUTURAJAWELA

By

K. L. D. Amaratunga\*

The Muturajawela swamp lies between Colombo and the Negombo lagoon, stretching northwards from Wattala to a little beyond Ja-Ela. Its eastern boundary is roughly demarcated by the Wattala Ja-Ela trunk road. On the coastal side, the drive from Hendala to Pamunugama could be taken for its western limits, thus leaving between it and the sea a relatively high sand ridge.

The area is low lying and consists mainly of acid peaty deposits. There is a layer of "muck" overlying peat and sandy clay. It has a mean annual rainfall of about 90" and a temperature of about 80° F. There is no pronounced dry season.

On visits made during March, June, September and December 1962/63, the following plants were in flower. In this list, against each name, the name of the family according to J. Hutchinsons system of classification is given.

### Nymphaeaceae

1. NYMPHAEA STELLATA Willd., Sp. Pl 2: 1153, 1799; Trimen Handb. Fl. Ceylon 1: 50, 1893.

Sinhala: Manel.

In ditches in swamp. Fl. March.

### Anonaceae

2. ANONA GLABRA L., Sp. Pl. ed. 1, 537, 1753.

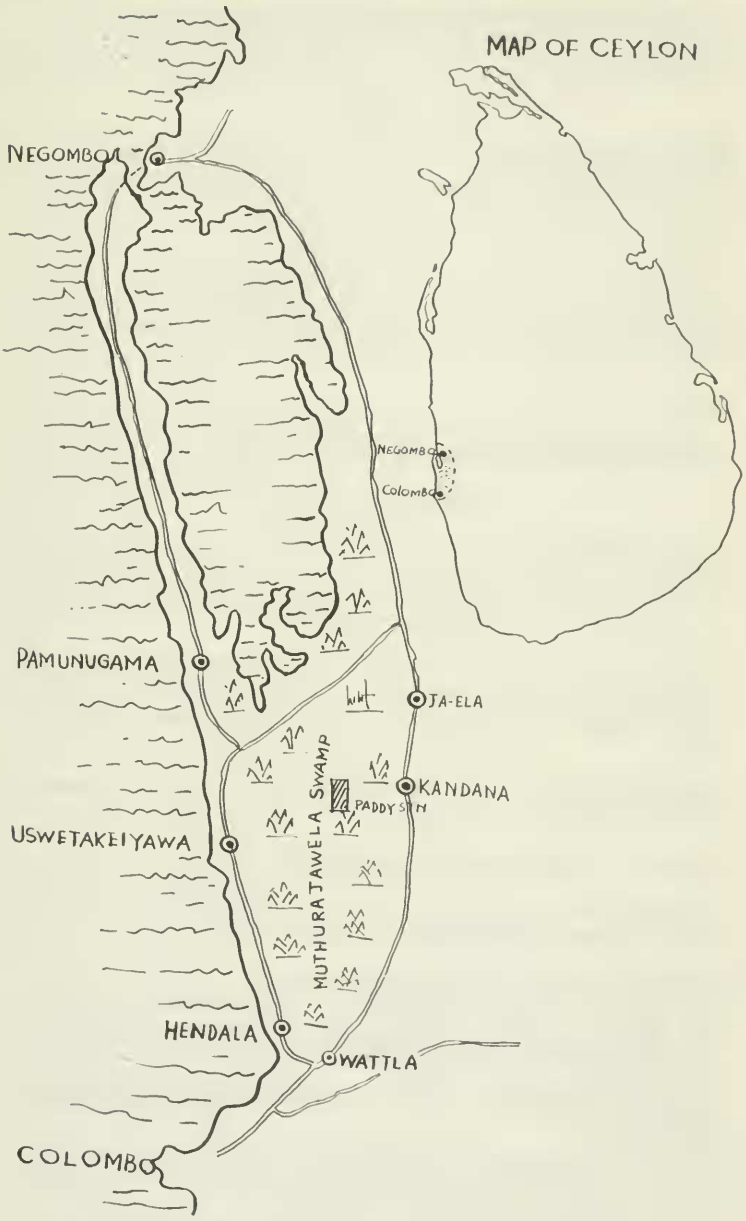
On earth fillings almost bordering water-filled marsh. This is the Alligator- or Monkey Apple of the West Indies.

### Lauraceae

3. CASSYTHA FILIFORMIS L., Sp. Pl. ed. 1, 35, 1753; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 455, 1895.

---

\* Herbarium, Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya, Ceylon.



MAP OF MUTHURAJAWELA SWAMP

Leafless parasites with twinning filiform stems provided with suckers on Anona glabra hedges bordering marsh. Fl. September.

## Droseraceae

4. DROSERA BURMANNI Vahl, Symb. Bot. 3: 50, 1794; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 145, 1894.

Sinhala: Wataessa.

In moist grassy patch in marsh. Fl. December.

5. DROSERA INDICA L., Sp. Pl. ed. 1, 282, 1753; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 146, 1894.

Sinhala: Kandul-essa.

On moist grassy patch in marsh. Fl. December.

## Fabaceae

6. ABRUS PRECATORIUS L., Syst. Nat. ed. 12, 472, 1767; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 57, 1894.

Sinhala: Olinda-wel; Tamil: Kuntomani.

A perennial twinner. Fl. December. The pretty scarlet and black seed (precatory beans) are used as weights by jewelers, however, are poisonous. The roots used as a folk drug.

7. AESCHYNOMENE ASPERA L., Sp. Pl. ed. 1, 713, 1753; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 39, 1894.

Sinhala: Maha-diya-siyambala; Tamil: Attuneddi.

On bunds traversing swamp. Fl. March. Slices of stems used in the making of pith hats.

8. DALBERGIA CANDENATENSIS (Dennst.) Prain, in Journ. Asiat. Doc. Bengal 70: 49, 1901; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon, 86, 1931. --- Dalbergia monosperma Dalziel, in Kew Journ. Bot. 2: 36, 1850; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 89, 1894.

Scrambling over bushes, particularly on Anona glabra. Fl. September.

9. DESMODIUM HETEROPLYLLUM (Willd.) DC., Prodr. 2: 334, 1825; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 55, 1894.

Sinhala: Maha-undupiyali.

A perennial straggler on Anona hedge. Fl. December.

10. *DESMOSIUM TRIQUETRUM* (L.) DC., Prodr. 2: 326, 1825; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 49, 1894.

Sinhala: Baloliya.

An erect shrub found along Anona hedge bordering marsh. Fl. June.

#### Simaroubaceae

11. *SAMADERA INDICA* Gaertner, Fruct. 2: 352, 1791: Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 1: 231, 1893.

Sinhala: Samadara.

Fl. December. The bark, root and fruit used as febrifuge medicines; leaf infusion used as insecticide and destructive to white termites.

#### Euphorbiaceae

12. *AGYNEIA BACCIFORMIS* (L.) A. Juss., ex Wight, Tent. Euphorb. 24, 1894; Thwaites, Enum. Pl. Zeyl. 283, 1861; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 4: 15, 1898.

Sinhala: Et-pilawakka.

On moist grassy patch in marsh. Annual with large tap root, and oval fleshy leaves. Fl. December.

13. *GLOCHIDION ZEYLANICUM* (Gaertn.) A. Juss., Tent. Euphorb. 107, 1824; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 4: 28, 1898.

Sinhala: Hunukirilla.

Tree on bund traversing marsh. Fl. December.

#### Balsaminaceae

14. *HYDROCERA TRIFLORA* (L.) Wight & Arn., Prodr. 140, 1834; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon, 36, 1931. --- *Hydrocera angustifolia* Blume, Bijd. 241, 1825; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 1: 212, 1893.

Sinhala: Diya-kudalu; Wal-kudalu.

On marshy ground. Fl. March.

#### Sterculiaceae

15. MELOCHIA CORCHORIFOLIA L., Sp. Pl. ed. 1, 675, 1753; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 1: 170, 1893.

Sinhala: Gal-kura.

A branched herb on waste ground. Fl. June.

#### Dilleniaceae

16. WORMIA TRIQUETRA Rottboell in Nov. Act. Hafn. 2: 532, 1783; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 1: 11, 1893.

Sinhala: Diya-para.

A small tree on damp ground. Fl. December.

#### Myrtaceae

17. SYZGIUM CARYOPHYLLATUM (L.) Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon, 116, 1931. --- *Eugenia corymbosa* Lamarck, Encycl. Meth. 3: 199, 1789; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 174, 1894.

On new earth fillings bordering marsh. Fl. March.

#### Melastomataceae

18. MALASTOMA MALABATHRICUM L., Sp. Pl. ed. 1, 390, 1753; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 199, 1894.

Sinhala: Maha-bowitiya.

On new earth fillings bordering marsh. Fl. March.

#### Onagraceae

19. LUDWIGIA ADSCENDENS (L.) Hara, in Journ. Jap. Bot. 28: 290, 1953; Raven, in Reinwardtia 6: 387, 1963. --- *Jussiaea repens* L., Sp. ed. 1, 388, 1753; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 233, 1894.

Sinhala: Beru-diyaniilla.

In marsh, prostrate and floating on water with white pneumatophores at nodes and from roots. Fl. September.

#### Symplocaceae

20. SYMLOCOS LOHA Buch.-Hamilton ex D. Don, Prodr. Fl. Nepal, 144, 1802-3; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.), 2: 209, 1959. --- *Symplocos spicata* Roxb. (Hort. Beng. 40, 1814. Nomen nudum), Fl. Ind. 3: 541, 1832; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 104, 1895.

Sinhala: Bombu; Wal-bombu.

Fl. March. Decoration of the bark is used as an external application, and the leaves afford a dye.

#### Apocynaceae

21. PARSONSIA LAEVIGARA (Moon) Alston, in Ann. Perad. 11: 203, 1927; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.), 2: 212, 1959. --- Parsonsia spiralis Wallich, (Cat. n. 1631, 1828, nomen nudum) ex A. DC., Prodr. 8: 402, 1844; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 134, 1895.

Sinhala: Valanguna.

Twining on Anona glabra. Fl. September.

#### Centianaceae

22. NYMPHOIDES AURANTIACA (Dalziel) O. Kuntze, Rev. Gen. Pl. 429, 1891; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.) 2: 211, 1959. --- Limnanthemum aurantiacum Dalziel, in Kew Journ. 2: 136, 1850; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 190, 1895.

In marsh. Fl. March.

23. NYMPHOIDES INDICA (L.) O. Kuntze, Rev. Gen. Pl. 429, 1891; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.) 2: 211, 1959. --- Limnanthemum indicum (L.) Thwaites, Enum. Pl. Zeyl. 205, 1861; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 188, 1895.

In marsh. Fl. March.

#### Asclepiadaceae

24. TYLOPHORA TENUISSIMA (Roxb.) Wight & Arnott, in Wight, Contrib. Bot. Ind. 49, 1834; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon, 195, 1931. --- Tylophora tenuis Blume, Bijdr. 1062, 1826; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 158, 1895.

Twinning on Anona glabra. Fl. December.

#### Convolvulaceae

25. ANISEIA MARTINICENSIS (Jacq.) Choisy, Conv. Rar. 144, 1838; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.) 2: 214, 1959. --- Ipomoea uniflora Roem. & Schult., Syst. 4: 247, 1819; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 215, 1895.

Sinhala: Poru-pala.

Twinning on plants bordering marsh. Fl. December.

## Verbenaceae

26. CLERODENDRON INFORTUNATUM L., Sp. Pl. ed. 1, 637, 1753; Trimén, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 361, 1895.

Sinhala: Gas-pinna.

Fl. December.

## Scrophulariaceae

27. BACOPA MONNIERA (L.) Wettstein, in Engl. & Pr., Nat. Pflanzenf. 4: 77, 1891; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 211, 1931. --- Herpestis monniera HBK, Nov. Gen. et Sp. Pl. 2: 366, 1817; Trimén, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 246, 1895.

Sinhala: Lunuwila.

Growing both in the marsh and on the banks of the bunds traversing the swamp. Plant of some medicinal value as a mild purgative.

28. LIMNOPHILA CONFERTA Benthám, in DC., Prodr. 10: 387, 1846; Trimén, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 243, 1895.

Sinhala: Amba-wila.

In marsh. Fl. March. Leaves bear a strong amphoraceous odour and taste, hence called "Kapuru" and chewed with betel.

29. LINDERNIA TENUIFOLIA (Colsm.) Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 214, 1931. --- Bonnaya tenuifolia Sprengel, Syst. 1: 42, 1825; Trimén, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 254, 1895.

On damp grassy patch adjoining marsh. Fl. December.

## Rubiaceae

30. MORINDA CITRIFOLIA L., Sp. Pl. ed. 1, 176, 1753; Trimén, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 354, 1894.

Sinhala: Ahu.

A small tree growing on Anona hedge. Fl. September. The root bark affords a red dye.

31. MAUCIEA ORIENTALIS L., Sp. Pl. 95, 1753; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 140, 1931. --- Sarcocephalus cordatus Miquel, Fl. Ind. Batav. 2: 133, 1856; Trimén, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 2: 292, 1894.

Sinhala: Kana-bakmi; Tamil: Vammi.

Fl. June.

Acanthaceae

32. *HYGROPHILA SALICIFOLIA* (Vahl) Nees, in Wall. Pl. As. Rar. 3: 81, 1832; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 298, 1895.

On moist banks of bunds almost bordering the water level in the marsh. Fl. March.

Compositae

33. *WEDELIA CHINENSIS* (Osbeck) Merrill in Philipp. Journ. Sci. (Bot.) 12: 111, 1917; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.) 2: 237, 1959. --- *Wedelia calendulacea* Less., Syn. Comp. 222, 1832; Trimen, Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 38, 1859.

Sinhala: Ran-wan-kikirindi.

On damp grassy banks of bunds traversing the marsh, growing almost bordering the water level. Fl. March.

-----  
Aponogetonaceae

34. *APONOGETON CRISPUM* Thunberg, Nov. Gen. 73, 1784; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 4: 372, 1898.

Sinhala: Kekatiya.

Plants submerged with solitary spike above water level. Fl. March. Tuber eaten in time of famine.

Gramineae

35. *ARUNDINELLA LEPTOCHLOA* (Nees ex Steud.) Hook. f., Fl. Brit. Ind. 7: 76, 1896; Seneratna, in Peradeniya Manual 8: 100, 1956.

Along Anona hedges bordering marsh. Fl. December.

36. *DIMERIA LEHMENNI* (Nees) Hackel, in DC., Monogr. Phaner. 6: 82, 1889; Seneratna, in Peradeniya Manual 8: 164, 1956.

On grassy patch bordering the road. Fl. June.

37. *ISCHAEMUM ARISTATUM* L., Sp. Pl. 1049, 1753; Seneratna, in Peradeniya Manual 8: 176, 1956. --- *Ischaemum ciliare* Retzius, Obs. Bot. 4: 36, 1791; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 216, 1900.



Sinhala: Rat-tana.

A common pasture grass on bunds traversing swamp. Fl. March.

38. ISCHAEMUM MUTICUM L., Sp. Pl. 1049, 1753; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 215, 1900; Seneratna, in Peradeniya Manual 8: 176, 1956.

Sinhala: Bada-mal-tana.

On bund traversing swamp. Fl. June. Used as a soil binder as well as a fodder grass.

39. ORYZA PERENNIS Moench., Meth. Pl. 197, 1794; Seneratna, in Peradeniya Manual 8: 36, 1956. --- Oryza sativa L., as misapplied by Trimen & Hooker f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 182, 1900.

Sinhala: Uruvi; Tamil: Pandi-nel.

In swamp as a weed on marshy paddy fields. Fl. December. Eaten by cattle.

40. SACCIOLEPIS INDICA (L.) Chase, in Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington 21: 8, 1908; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon, 319, 1931; Seneratna, in Peradeniya Manual 8: 121, 1956. --- Panicum indicum L., Mant. 2: 184, 1771; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 147, 1900.

On grassy bank bordering swamp; gregarious habit. Fl. June.

41. ZOYSIA MATRELLA (L.) Merrill, Philip. Journ. Sci., Bot., 7: 230, 1912; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 329, 1931. --- Zoysia pungens Willd., in Ges. Naturf. Fr. Berlin, N. Schr. 3: 441, 1801; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 188, 1900.

On road banks acting as a good sand binder. Fl. September.

#### Cyperaceae

42. CYPERUS HASPAN L., Sp. Pl. ed. 1, 45, 1753; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 26, 1900.

Sinhala: Halpan.

In marsh. Fl. March.

43. CYPERUS PLATYPHYLLUS Roemer & Schultes, Syst. 2: 876, 1817; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 38, 1900.

In marsh with its rootstock under water. Fl. March.

44. CYPERUS POLYSTACHYOS Rottboell, Descr. & Icon. 39, 1773; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 20, 1900. --- Pycneus polystachyos P. Beauvois, Fl. Owar. 2: 48, t. 86, 1807; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 307, 1931.
- In marsh. Fl. March.
45. DIPLACRUM CARICINUM R. Brown, Prodr. Fl. Nov. Hol. 241, 1810; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 101, 1900.
- A small tufted glabrous annual on moist grassy patches in marsh. Fl. September.
46. ELEOCHARIS DULCIS (Burm. f.) Henschel, Vita Rumph. 186, 1833; T. Koyama, in Contrib. Inst. Bot. Univ. Montreal 70: 35, 19, 1957. --- Eleocharis equisetina Presl, Rel. Haenk. 1: 195, 1830; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 69, 1900.
- Fl. March.
47. ELEOCHARIS SPIRALIS (Rottb.) Roem. & Schult., Syst. Veg. 2: 155, 1817; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 70, 1900.
- Shallow water in marsh. Fl. March.
48. FIMBRISTYLIS ACUMINATA Vahl, Enum. Pl. 2: 285, 1806; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 48, 1900.
- On bunds traversing swamp. Fl. March.
49. FIMBRISTYLIS CINNAMOMETORUM (Vahl) Kunth, Enum. Pl. 2: 229, 1837; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 61, 1900. --- Abildaardia cinnamometorum (Vahl) Thwaites, Enum. Pl. Zeyl. 347, 1864; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.) 2: 135, 1959.
- In marsh almost bordering water level. Fl. September.
50. FIMBRISTYLIS DICHOTOMA (L.) Vahl, Enum. Pl. 2: 287, 1806; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.) 2: 134, 1959. --- Fimbristylis annua (All.) Roem. & Schult., Syst. 2: 95, 1817; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 309, 1931. --- Fimbristylis diphylla (Retz.) Vahl, Enum. Pl. 2: 289, 1806; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 53, 1900.
- In marsh.
51. FUIRENA UMBELLATA Rottboell, Descr. & Icon. Pl. 70, t. 19, f. 3, 1773; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 80, 1900.

In marsh. Fl. March.

52. *LEPIRONIA ARTICULATA* (Retzius) Domin, Bibliothec. Bot. 85: 486, 1915; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 311, 1931. --- *Lepironia mucronata* Rich., in Persoon, Syn. 1: 70, 1805; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 88, 1900.

Sinhala: Etaan.

In marsh, normally in brackish swamp. Fl. March. Culm used for making a rough sac called Ampera.

53. *RHYNCHOSPORA CORYMBOSA* (L.) Britton, in Trans. N.Y. Acad. Sci. 11: 86, 1892; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 311, 1931. --- *Rhynchospora aurea* Vahl, Enum. Pl. 2: 229, 1806; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 82, 1900.

In marsh. Fl. June.

54. *RHYNCHOSPORA RUBRA* (Lour.) Makino, in Bot. Mag. Tokyo 18: 180, 1903; Alston, Suppl. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 311, 1931. --- *Rhynchospora wallichiana* Kunth, Enum. Pl. 2: 289, 1837; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 83, 1900.

55. *SCLERIA POAEFORMIS* Retzius, Obs. Bot. 4: 13, 1786; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.) 2: 137, 1959. --- *Scleria oryzoides* Presl, Rel. Haenk. 1: 201, 1830; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 99, 1900.

Sinhala: Potu-pan; Potu-kola.

In marsh. Fl. March.

56. *SCLERIA SUMATRENSIS* Retz., Obs. Bot. 5: 19, 1789; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 96, 1900.

Fl. September.

57. *SCLERIA TESSELLATA* Willd., Sp. Pl. 4: 315, 1805; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 98, 1900.

In marsh. Fl. March.

#### Flagellariaceae

58. *HANGUANA MALAYANA* (Jacq.) Merrill, in Philip, Journ. Sci., Bot., 10: 3, 1915; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.) 2: 140, 1959. --- *Susum anthelminticum* Blume, in Schultes f., Syst. 8: 1493, 1830; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 4: 317, 1898.

Sinhala: Induru.

In marsh; the long flagelliform shoots floating on water.  
Fl. March.

## Xyridaceae

59. XYRIS INDICA L., Sp. Pl. 42, 1753; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 4: 297, 1898.

Sinhala: Ran-mota.

In marsh. Fl. December.

## Eriocaulaceae

60. ERIOCAULON SEXANGULARE L., Sp. pl. 87, 1753; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 5: 5, 1900.

Sinhala: Kokmota.

In marsh. Fl. in March.

## Commelinaceae

61. MURDANNIA GIGANTEA (Vahl) Brueckner, in Engl. & Pr., Nat. Pflanzenf. 2 Aufl., 15: 173, 1930; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.) 2: 141, 1959. --- Aneilema giganteum R. Br., Prodr. Fl. Nov. Hol. 271, 1810; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 4: 308, 1898.

In marsh. Fl. March.

62. MURDANNIA VAGINATA (L.) Brueckner, l. c.; Abeywickrama, in Ceylon Journ. Sci. (Biol. Sci.) 2: 141, 1959. --- Aneilema vaginatum R. Br., Prodr. Fl. Nov. Hol. 271, 1810; Thwaites, Enum. Pl. Zeyl. 322, 1864; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 4: 309, 1898.

On moist grassy patch. Fl. June.

## Liliaceae

63. ASPARAGUS FALCATUM L., Sp. Pl. 313, 1753; Trimen & Hook. f., Handb. Fl. Ceylon 4: 285, 1898.

Sinhala: Hatawariya.

On new earth fillings bordering marsh. Fl. March. Tuberos roots used as a folk medicine.

Acknowledgement

The writer is grateful to Prof. Dr. T. Koyama, Curator, The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York, U.S.A. for his helpful review of the script and to Dr. J. W. L. Peiris, Deputy Director of Agriculture (Research), Central Agricultural Research Institute, Gannoruwa, Peradeniya, Ceylon for his interest in this work.